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Communism is an extremely complex phenomenon; and that complexity, - as astute observers like Monnerot have clearly seen - by impeding its analysis and hence the possibility of effectively coming to grips with it, is in itself no small element of its strength.

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There is, first of all, the original ideological impulse of Marxism. Itself a most complicated, and contradictory doctrine. A vast sprawling cosmos of disciplines: philosophy, world history, political and economic teaching, combining in a strange compound the emotional appeal of a secular religion of unprecedented messianic virulence with the all the more amazing abstract belief in the strict scientific exactness of its doctrines. Today still further complicated by its "continuation" at the hands of Lenin (Leninism) as well as the widely different interpretations which even in its orthodox form it has today, in practice, with Western European adherents like: Haldane, Prenant, Lefebvre, Lukacs; Soviet Marxists (Wetter; Bochenski); and Far Eastern exponents.

There is, second, the development of that impulse into a political movement; first in the form of "Marxist Socialism"; then, from the First World War onwards, in the implacably militant concentration into "Communism"; combining within itself the aspects of a new "Islam" (Monnerot) with those of strictly disciplined military organization (Kintner).

There is, thirdly, the capture by that movement under the leadership of Lenin, of a basis of political power in Russia; with the consequent grafting of the Marxist-Leninist creed upon the conditions presented by the Russian country, national traditions, and resulting national character (Bolshevism).

There is, fourthly, the marked inner transformation which this phenomenon of Bolshevism, or of the Soviet System, as originally crystallized by Lenin and his circle, underwent in the course of the inner struggle resulting in the elimination of the Old Guard by Stalin and the reshaping of the Soviet System through their replacement by his methods and supporters. (Stalinism)

Fifthly, there is the vast new complex of new modifications and problems which has arisen out of the fact that, after a period of retrenchment and inner development of its forces, the Soviet Union has, since the Second World War, expanded its activities again into the international sphere. That it has projected its influence over vast territories and human masses both in Eastern Europe and in the Far East. And, finally, that, as a result of this vastly increased basis, it has been enabled to enter into the new forms of political struggle, known as "cold war", with its opponents on a global scale. (World-Communism)

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The following study is not concerned with this vast complex phenomenon as a whole. It tries to deal merely with the far more limited problem of the growth and structure of its central pillar, the Soviet System, and with the means of psychological counter-attack, which might be brought to bear against it.

It does not endeavor to deal with the problems raised by World Communism either as an "Islam" or a "military organization"; nor with the Communist movement in Western Europe, or Soviet influence in the Satellite States of Eastern Europe or in the Far East. But, even within its strictly circumscribed area and objectives it could not pose the issues involved satisfactorily without first having pointed out their relations to the phenomenon as a whole in all its complexity.

The Development of the Bolshevist-Stalinist System

When Lenin in November 1917 succeeded in grasping control of the centers of political power in Russia his and his supporters ideas on the forms of political organization and control to be adopted, were anything but clear. Marx himself had left this issue in a state of extreme vagueness and confusion. On the one side the whole significance of his message was that the victory of the proletariat would result in the total and final, liberation of man. He had spoken of the withering away of the state. On the other, he had spoken in 2 or 3, not very prominent, places of an intermediate phase of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat; but he had never defined what he meant thereby. Lenin's autocratic nature drove him to make the most of the latter aspect; but both he and his circle were far too much imbued with the other "libertarian" aspect of Marxism, as to be willing to renounce it. The practice, this inner conflict found its expression in the strange dualism of the pyramid of Soviets on the one hand, its virtual control by the dictatorship of the Bolshevik party on the other.

The same conflict, only in a more acute form, presented itself in the party itself. As a "political body" it had to have the freedom of discussion with its ranks, in order "to make up its mind". As a militant elite bent upon imposing its dictatorship upon the Russian masses it had to have an iron discipline. In Lenin's days that conflict was resolved largely along the lines of leaving discussion open until the Party had arrived at the establishment of a "line", but thereafter to require absolute submission to it. Already under Lenin, however, the tendency of this still relatively loose and flexible original dictatorship - with its uneasy balance between "authoritarian" and "libertarian" elements - to transform itself into the present "monolithic" system of control and repression was plainly evident. Two factors stood out in this process and through their accumulated influence have become the main pillars of the Stalinist system: the general control over the socio-economic life of the

country planned

country planned from the outset by Lenin and the Bolshevik Party, and second, the peculiar transformation and accentuation imparted to it by Stalin.

The control over the socio-economic life of the country, established by the Bolshevik Party under Lenin's leadership, inevitably had the result of impinging, far beyond its immediate spheres of application, upon the freedom of action and thought of every individual subjected to it; both indirectly, through the laying down of the general lines along which the life of the country and of the people in it, was to proceed; and directly, through the control of his individual status within that vast apparatus which it made possible. After the initial period of War Communism it was temporarily restrained by Lenin in the NEP period, but intensified as soon as, with the victory of Stalin over his rivals, the process of completing the socialization of the Russian economy was resumed. In the two great sectors of that process which was carried through in the late twenties and thirties: the collectivization of agriculture and the building up of a powerful industrial basis the two objectives of economic advancement and increase of control appear inextricably intertwined. In the collectivization of agriculture the coordination of activities of the individual peasant households and the replacement of the traditional animal power by the new mechanical means concentrated in the state-provided tractor stations had equally the purpose of bringing the traditionally most independent element in any population, the peasant, under the party's control and of replacing obsolete and wasteful methods of production by modern and rational ones. The same combination of motives has obviously been operating in the two further changes in agriculture: the widespread electrification of the Kolchoses after the Second World War, and the present attempt to combine the Kolchoses into larger "agricultural towns" (agraro gorods).

Similarly, the build-up of the industrial sector of the country had, in addition to the provision of the bases for the war effort of the Soviet Union in the Second World War, the purpose and effect of controlling the masses of directors, engineers, and workmen through their places in the new machinery. A possibility that was greatly intensified by the decline of the original influence of the trade unions and through the series of measures introduced in the year 1940 as part of the country's preparation against the menace of Hitler's attack: the compulsory training of boys and girls (including the obligation to repay for it by serving the next 4 years in any position assigned), the introduction of workbooks for workmen and the virtual freezing of laborers in their jobs. Only the small fraction represented by the cooperatives, with a total of 1-1/2 million somewhat escape the full impact of this system. To round off this side of the picture it is perhaps not unnecessary to point out to what an extent those groups which in Western Society constitute the most representative exponents of the economically independent and, therefore, politically and ideologically "free" individuals, the professions,

have been

have been brought under socio-economic control in the Soviet Union. There are not only no "free" directors, engineers, professors and school teachers, but neither any "free" architects, lawyers, agronomists, scientific workers. Among the medical profession the overwhelming number are today in a state appointment; private practice is not absolutely forbidden, but severely frowned upon and heavily taxed. Thus of the 2.2 million of members of the "leading groups which belong to these categories (enumerated by Molotov at the 18th Congress of the Communist Party) only a tiny fraction, part of the 159,000 "art workers", can be considered as enjoying any appreciable measure of freedom in their occupation.

The control exercised by the heads of the Soviet system over their "subjects" by these socio-economic means alone is thus far greater than the corresponding controls in any of the other totalitarian regimes. Whether the Fascist, the Japanese, or even the National-Socialist. But, beyond these basic controls it is still infinitely more accentuated by the methods of control and repression, first inaugurated by the Cheka and then developed into an unprecedented and unparalleled machinery of totalitarian control by Stalin and his collaborators.

Stalin's rise to supreme power over his divided and mutually antagonistic rivals meant incomparably more than merely the decision of the struggle for the supreme power. It meant the physical elimination not merely of his immediate rivals, but eventually of most of the Old Bolshevik Guard from the hierarchy of the party; their replacement through men not merely of his choice, but of a wholly new type. In the place of the fiery agitators and improvisers like Trotzky and Sinowjew, theorists like Bukhanin, journalists like Radek, men of his own type, hard headed unemotional, brutal administrators and bureaucrats like Kirov, Zdanov, Malenkov, Kaganovich, Voznesensky; the "men with the strong faces" of whom Ribbentrop rapturously declaimed to his staff after his first contact with them in the Kremlin. It meant the radical suppression, under the maintenance, and in fact increased emphasis upon the forms of democratic freedom (constitution of 1936) of the last vestiges of the "libertarian" element originally contained in Marxism and even in Leninist Bolshevism. It meant a rapidly developing cult of personal leadership. And it meant, finally, a most noticeable general change in the spirit of the entire regime. ("The period was characterized by the deep and heartfelt distrust felt by the Soviet regime for any kind of idealism or ideological bond. The result was a fundamental change in the methods used by the foreign department of the NKVD. Paid agents took the place of enthusiastic Communists working illegally for nothing." Beck and Godin p.158/4. "...the deep distrust of idealistic motives we have so frequently mentioned..." Beck and Godin p.259.")

This vast process of the transformation of the Bolshevik into the present Stalinist system and with it the ever increasing tightening up

of the means

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of the means of control was carried through in a series of major stages: the Great Purge, the preparation for and the War against Hitler, the Revenge, and the Post-War Consolidation. The first of them, the Great Purge of 1936-39 laid the foundations. First, by virtually wiping out the mass of the existing party and affiliated hierarchy; second, by breaking up any potential centers of independent action, within the Army or the key Transport Organization. The approach and coming of the War gave the regime a unique opportunity for following up this radical period of repression by a ringing emotional appeal.. "The war of 1941-45" Dr. Reme' begins his first essay "is called by the Russians "The august patriotic war." To the Russian political leadership, as it was since it gave them the moral means to silence any form of inner discontent in the country. With the War the complaints about all grievances and injustices ceased and whoever "did not cooperate" was no longer a mere dissentigent, but a traitor against the cause of the fatherland struggling for its sheer existence against the invader."

Despite the power of this patriotic appeal the degree of inner opposition generated by the collectivization of the farms and the Great Purge was such that Dr. Reme' estimates the part of the Soviet population originally ready to side with the Germans at no less than 3/4.

"The Revenge of the Soviet regime was terrible. Everybody who during the German occupation had remained at his place was, and is, suspect... With the fighting forces who recovered Russian territory, came already the Commisar, who examined every single civilian. The verdicts were quickly executed."

The fourth phase, the Reconsolidation after the War was characterized by three major significant developments. The first was the reassertion of the Party's control over the Army, punch-drunk by its victories. The second was the intensification of the control over the intellectual life of the nation endeavoring to counteract the efforts of the inevitable loosening-up during the war by an increased anti-Western tendency, particularly propagated by Zdanov and skillfully utilizing the immensely increased national pride and rabid chauvinism. The third was the development of the system of mass-transplantations, by which unreliable elements like the Volga Germans, and many Poles had been removed far into the interior, into a systematic procedure. Crim tartars, Don Cossacks, Caucasus tribes, large groups amongst Ukrainians and Bielo Russians, Poles, Latvians, Lithuanians and Estonians being moved into Asia, while Central Asiatics were sent into the newly acquired Western Marches: The Bukovina, Eastern Poland and the Russian part of East Prussia.

The Stalinist regime of control, as it had developed through the successive stages and events, has brought the rationality of totalitarian control to its complete and extreme consequences.

On the one

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On the one hand, the small ruling group at the top, which has kept its identity almost unchanged and fights out, whatever internal dissonances exist within it, behind the closed doors of the Politburo, maintains its position by playing out simultaneously the lower hierarchy against the masses, and the masses against the hierarchy. On the one side it tries to draw the administrative and managerial elite, the plant directors, engineers, technicians, the collective farm chairmen, the workers aristocracy of foremen, brigade leaders and Stakhanovite workers into its hierarchial structure of privileged and rewards. It treats them as a privileged category and pays them well. It seeks to draw them into the party itself and to identify them actively with the party leadership. (Fainrod) It seeks thus to utilize the tendency in the Soviet society to organize itself into a series of concentric circles of privileged, the members of each of which try to an ever increasing degree to cut themselves off from all socially inferior circles. (Beck and Godin: Russian Purge, etc.)

While thus basing itself upon these categories en masse, it simultaneously utilizes the hatred felt for all officials and all privileged elements (above all the officers and their wives) by the masses, and again by the lower against the higher officials (Beck and Godin) in order to keep through these pressures the members of these groups as individuals under control. In the post-war years no longer in the form of the Great Purge, but in form of "drives" against individuals or groups, mobilizing against them the most different types of mass-urges: chauvinism, anti-intellectualism, anti-semitism. "You must know that in the spring of 1949 a systematic press campaign was started against the "Cosmopolites, bourgeois elements, and passless vagrants." The articles appeared in the Pravda and from there were taken over (as usual) by the provincial press. This anti-cosmopolitic wave was very curious. The attacked sat in positions of considerable influence; e.g., director of the plans for all theaters in Charkov, Professor at the teachers academy in Makajawska, director of the local radio station, etc. Frequently, they were even members of the party. Their names revealed without exception Jewish origin. We all expected that Llya Ehrenburg would fall also - what did not happen. The crimes consisted in the fact, that these peoples had brought too much "western civilization" among the peoples and had neglected to emphasize the primacy (superiority) of everything Russian in Poetry, Drama, and Music" (Dr. Reme).

Other forms, in which this mobilization of the masses against individual members or groups among the hierarchy is being set into motion are the meetings preceding the election of the officials at the lower levels, special meetings called at the instigation of the higher authorities for the purposes of "criticism and self-criticism" (e.g., the famous meetings in March and again from the 16-25 June 1925 in which the Russian philosophers at the instigation of nobody less than Zdanov condemned G. F. Alexandrov's book on "The History of Philosophy in Western Europe." A discussion considered so important that its

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stenographic account was subsequently published in extense and considered a major turning point, while Zdanov's own speech was attributed "almost classical" significance (Bochenski). The same purpose of utilizing the masses as a check upon the lower rungs of the hierarchy is served by the encouragement of peoples all over the Soviet Union to write to Stalin as well as by the space and devoted to "letters to the editor" printed in the Pravda and similar prominent publications.

From the point of view of the ruling group this constant appeal to the masses against the hierarchy and the privileged elements obviously fulfills a number of concurrent purposes. It secures to the regime a wide degree of mass support. It provides an independent channel of information upon the popular feeling. It deflects popular resentment from the ruling group and its policies and turns it against their executives. It enables the top group to break up contributions between local officials. It serves as a general safety valve. Finally, it makes possible the practice of presenting the authoritarian Soviet System as the most advanced and extreme of Democracies.

To these two "general" forms of control: through the socialization of the entire socio-economic structure of the country and through the control of the masses by the hierarchy and of the hierarchy by the masses, the Soviet system under Stalin has added yet another, individual and infinitely more penetrating. The essence and objective is the complete isolation of the individual.

Through the all-pervading employment of secret informers, the notorious Sek-sot's ("the most revolting phenomenon of Soviet life which gave it a stamp of its own") every Soviet citizen at every step, wherever he may be, feels himself under constant observation. Subjectively, at any rate, he can never feel from it, neither at work, nor in the street, nor talking to friends or among his family. Moreover, he knows that his comfort, however limited that may be, his social position, his liberty and his life depend upon them. His secretaries are most probably among them. If they are not, a favorite desire is to arrest them under some pretense or other and bring them to talk. If he should have the misfortune of arousing the "displeasure" of the authorities, his friends, even his closest relatives, are forced for their own safety to renounce and repudiate him. In all the Bolshevism has been infinitely more consistent and gone infinitely further than even National Socialism which never really penetrated into the intimate life of the individual German and which did not introduce the principle of making an individual's family hostages for his behavior ("Sippenhaft") until the last states of the War.

Similarly, National Socialism never thought of going as far in the intellectual as well as the political and social isolation of the individual. Upon coming to power the Nazi leadership did indeed build up a propaganda machine modeled upon the Russian original (Hagemann), but, it relied upon its positive effects. No consistent efforts were made, to

cut those

cut those not affected by it systematically off from the communication with, and the ideas of, the outside world. Travel abroad was gradually restricted through the general currency stringency, but hardly any difficulty in the case of real need. The import of periodicals and books was not interfered with to any but a very limited degree.

In contrast, under the Bolshevik system the tendency has been increasingly to regard every form of contact of its citizens with the outside world as a contamination to be dreaded more than anything else. During the first decade and a half, while the Soviet government itself sent out its most capable citizens for studies abroad (e.g., the officers sent under the secret agreement with the Reichswehr to the latter's General Staff courses and maneuvers) and invited foreigners en masse as indispensable advisers in building the new economy these controls were comparatively leniently handled. But, in the Great Purge of 1936-39 any form of contact with the foreign world (foreign birth, travel abroad, correspondence with foreigners, even down to officially ordered contacts with foreign representatives in Russia) became one of the most widespread, most irrational, and most dangerous of the "objective characteristics" liable to lead to arrest, confession, and condemnation.

The temporary unavoidable necessity to loosen these controls during the period of collaboration with the Western Allies in the Second World War the profound impact which the civilization of the West, even where in ruins, made upon the Russian soldiers, and the widespread wave of doubts and discontent aroused by their accounts (Dr. Remé; "report of an artist") drove the Soviet authorities in the post-war years to redoubled efforts to reaffirm their policy of intellectual isolation. Severe quarantines and questionings were imposed upon all returnees. The controls over the forces of occupation were tightened as completely as possible. At home a wave of "anti-Westernism" was unleashed throughout the country as a kind of anti-toxin.

Hand in hand with these general endeavors to cut the intellectual life of the country as far as possible off from the contacts with the outside world and make it entirely subservient to the ideas imposed upon it, went the other, much less noticed, but no less significant, policy of the intellectual isolation of the individual through the compartmentalization of knowledge "Secrecy" plays in all armies a great role. With the Germans, however, it did not really exist. With the Russians in the most extreme manner. But mainly because effectively nobody knew anything, and nobody even today knows anything. The people are very loquacious and what I wanted to find out from them I have always succeeded in. But it was never much, because the same maneuvers of deception and concealment, which were utilized against the foreigner were equally applied to their own peoples" (Dr. Remé)

Psychological Reactions of the Russian People to the Soviet System

The Soviet system as thus brought to its logical conclusions under Stalin represents the most extreme, the most coldly rational, the most ruthless form of totalitarianism. In that respect, it is infinitely more consistent than even National Socialism, not to speak of either the Japanese military leaders or Fascism. Materially, it has had infinitely less to offer to its subjects than any of the other totalitarian regimes. Fascism never demanded any material sacrifices, other than purely theatrical ones. National socialism as we know today cut seriously into the standards of living of the German people only in the later stages of the War. Japanese militarism did so from 1937 onwards, and appreciably since the regimentation under the New Order of Prince Konoye in the autumn of 1940. But, the Japanese masses are particularly indoctrinated by many centuries of training to accept national sacrifices in the interest of the national cause.

Compared with all of them, the Soviet System had, in the material field, very little to offer. The privations necessary both for the collectivization of the peasantry and the creation of a powerful heavy industry bore severely upon practically all groups of the population. The material benefits which accrued against it lay mainly in the strengthening of the military potential of the country or else in the future. As far as the present was concerned, the groups which experienced a definite betterment of their social and economic position were:

- a.) the leading managerial and professional elite, and possibly
- b.) the poorer peasants.

Against these limited material improvements the measure of "oppression" exercised by the system was incomparably greater than under any other, and in fact virtually universal. Even the dreaded Secret Police, under its changing designations and leaders was in no way exempt for it. On the contrary, as Beck and Godin have shown, during the Great Purge membership in the NKVD, and above all high rank in it, carried with it the imminent threat not only of arrest, but, in case of this, of exceptionally severe treatment and repression.

What, against this "objective" background of the Soviet system, are the "subjective" psychological reactions of the widely diversified Russian people subject to it? The answer can obviously be anything but simple. Hard experience under its impact has taught the Russians to curb their natural loquacity and gregariousness. Beck and Godin in their study of the Great Purge go even so far as to state: "It can be claimed that without long residence in the NKVD cells (where the hopelessness of their plight induced people to speak freely their minds) it is impossible to find out what the Russian people really

feel or think."

feel or think." (p.88) On the other hand, those who escape from it, are, like all emigres, inclined to exaggerate the degree of psychological resistance existing. Nevertheless, the testimony of practically all observers who have been able to get some intimate insight into the minds of the Russian people in recent years tend to converge towards three main conclusions:

First, that there is indeed, as only to be expected, a feeling of oppression and discontent, both widely spread and deeply felt;

Secondly, that this feeling is essentially passive;

Thirdly, that it is balanced by the genuine emotional support which the Soviet regime has succeeded in creating in large segments of the population; the success of Soviet propaganda in imposing its "view of the world" even upon those, who inwardly disagree with it; as well as in the susceptibility of the Russian masses to the emotional appeals with which they are skillfully manipulated.

"The younger generation, though by and large approving the structure of the Soviet State, violently criticized the government's action and in particular the authoritarian control of State and party" Beck and Godin found during the great purge, (p. 91). "It is certainly an overstatement to say that all Russians are against their present rulers and Communism. Yet there is no doubt that a political disgruntlement is today as widespread as before the war in Russia." (Anesimav: Russian Review. Jan. 51 p.24).

"Maintenance of the regime is only possible through coercion, and through ever newly thought out methods on the part of the Soviet authorities to retain their power. Thus, indoctrination courses are only possible, if the exits are being watched. Otherwise, many would just come to let themselves be seen in order to go home again. The young generation has no idea of the life of the non-Russian world. The situation has now, however, been severely shaken through the impressions of the soldiers coming home from the West and quite under the ban of the impression how different the Western World really looks than it has been described to them. Very much dissatisfaction with the regime, which, however, is being expressed by the older generation not at all, by the younger only occasionally." ("report of an artist").

"A dissatisfaction which very justifiedly directs itself against the most manifold abuses, such as were (and are!): social injustices; a very strict labor discipline, constant supervision of the private life even of the most insignificant individual down to the most intimate details; the hatred against the class of small political leaders (in the armed forces: the officers and their wives) who alone live a secure life with a good income, dissatisfaction at the constant transplantations against which nobody was, or is, safe; the discontent amongst

the peasantry

the peasantry against their deprivation of even the last remnants of privately owned land in 1935 with the consequence of a vast famine; denunciations within the party," (Dr. Reme - First essay) To illustrate this profound feeling of unhappiness on the part of practically all Russians whom he met, Dr. Reme gives the story of a lady doctor, who in the summer of 1946 rushed into the ward of the hospital, where he was working with two other Germans, with the rumor, that negotiations were under way to put the Ukraine for 25 years under American administration. "God be thanked, I shall stay, I shall stay, and then for the first time in my life I shall be a free human being." (end of first essay).

This general feeling of unhappiness and oppression appears more characteristic of the post-war discontent, than the particular and political issues of the liquidation of the Kulas and the renunciation of the ideals of the Revolution, which Beck and Godin, had found the chief topic among the younger generation during the Great Purge. But, it is interesting that the sharp difference of attitude towards Lenin and Stalin, which they noted and described, has persisted. ("The attitude toward Stalin of young people, particularly members of the Komsomol, contrasted significantly with the devotion accorded to Lenin as leader of the Revolution. For Lenin the great mass of the people had a warm feeling of love and respect. The feeling for Stalin even on the part of his most faithful followers, never had this quality. At most, it was a feeling of esteem combined with a rational appreciation of the need for discipline and authority. The leadership cult seemed as unnatural in Russia as it does anywhere else. It had a definitely artificial, imposed-from-above character." "Lenin is with nearly all Russians I met something like a national hero. Stalin, on the other hand, is anything but popular with the common man. The reason for this I do not know." Dr. Reme, second essay.)

Nowhere, however, is there any evidence that this feeling of discontent has so far revealed itself ready to crystalize into any form of tangible opposition. Beck and Godin claim indeed to have found a hard core of irreconcilable hostility to Communism particularly among quite simple people, revolted at the violence of its methods and arbitrariness of its actions. (p.88)

But they too have to add, in the next breath... "combined, it is true, with complete resignation. The thought of engaging in any form of political activity was entirely foreign to these people. They had no political aims, their only concerns were for their families and for themselves. Their sole ambition was to find for themselves a corner in the Soviet Union where they would be as sheltered as possible from the regime and its rigors."

This combination of a deep rooted feeling of oppression with hopeless resignation in the face of it appears the general pattern of

post-war discontent.

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post-war discontent. "The most depressing fact for them, "Dr. Reme writes in his second essay of those Russians, whose full confidence he had ~~succeeded~~ in gaining," was the hopelessness of their existence. "It's just simply so that it will never be different for us." Descriptions that one could buy in the Western world all sorts of things in any quantity desired: cooking pots, ladies hose, chocolate, hats, first called forth a wave of unbelief and then frequently a stream of tears. "It is all so clean with you! There are shops, there are windows on the streets. With you one is not constantly under control."

In part this astonishing resignation is probably nothing but the characteristic, and almost unbelievable, passivity of the Russian character. Anesimov describes the picking out by a Soviet officer of Soviet citizens out of an Auxiliary Russian unit with the Germans that had been captured by the Allies in the West. Most identity papers had been destroyed. Yet within twenty minutes the officer had picked out the 500 men, approximately half of whom were Soviet citizens, all his men judging only by their appearance, and out of these 250 only 8 did not own up; although nobody could have forced them to do so and stubborn denial instead of ready confession meant all the difference between life and death. In part, however, it sprang also from a definite and clear realization of the effectiveness of the Soviet system of control in preventing any latent opposition from organizing itself and gathering momentum. Prof. Fainsod found in his interviews with Soviet defectors - who obviously represent by far the most energetic minority among the discontented- that most of the persons interviewed discounted the possibility "or probability of any organized or spontaneous effort to unseat the Communist regime in the near future. There seemed to be general agreement among them that the power of the secret police was too all-pervasive, and that the opportunity for an effective organization of a revolutionary movement inside the Soviet Union at the present time was de minimis. Nor did most of them think that the death of Stalin would make any substantial difference. They were prepared to concede the possibility of a bitter intra-party struggle for the succession, but they did not think that that struggle would go deep enough to open the way to a revolutionary movement which would dislodge the Communist regime itself." (Am. Pol. Science Rev. Vol. XLN No. 2 p. 277.)

Where, therefore, discontent rose above the mere "passive" level it tended to take mainly "evasive" instead of "active" forms: such as the endeavor to evade indoctrination mentioned above ("Report of an Artist"); listening to foreign broadcasts widely spread among the few able to afford an individual receiving set; in extreme cases efforts to escape to the West.

Over this uncertain, weak-willed, inactive and unorganized discontent the Soviet regime maintains spiritual holds still overwhelming.

There is, first and foremost, the power and appeal of the Communist idea itself. In the "heroic" periods of the regime - the years of the Civil War and the founding of the Regime, and again

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during the first Five Year Plan - its strength and impulse were tremendous. Since then it has undoubtedly been worn down, both by the series of excessive strains imposed, as well as through the general turn from revolutionary elation to an emphasis upon order and conformity. Yet a good deal of it is likely to have survived, particularly among youth. "It was so wonderful to think that everything was grand and good in our country," a Soviet guerrilla girl, whom the Germans had captured, pardoned and converted, told Anesimov "that we were on the right side; that it was our duty to save the rest of the world from the terrible capitalist and fascist exploitation. Now I know all this was not true. Still, I think we ought to have some great common goal to strive for. Everybody for himself does not satisfy me."

There is, second, the systematic completeness of the indoctrination which seeks to impose a framework of reference out of which there is no escape. This persistent hold of Soviet ideology over the generation which had grown up under its influence emerges from all reports: Beck and Godin's account of the Great Purge, Prof. Fainsod's study of the Komsomols, Anesimov's sketches of encounters with Soviet prisoners of war, Dr. Rene's accounts of the many doctors and nurses whom he met during his five years of captivity in the Soviet Union. "A large part of the Soviet population, Beck and Godin agreed, though dissatisfied with individual aspects of Soviet rule regarded the Soviet regime as its own beloved mother and wanted no other". (page 101). And again: "The loyal or "convinced" Soviet citizen as he calls himself may be dissatisfied with Soviet rule and hurt by it, but losing faith in it would mean losing faith in himself." (P. 209) This influence survived even such shocks as captivity and conversion as Anesimov found both in the case of the guerrilla girl and that of a group of Russian boy captives who had joined the German side and whom he accompanied on a trip through Germany. "Usually, he concludes, the Soviet citizen remains "faith-conditioned" regardless of what the content of his faith is. Whether Communist or not, he continues to see the world in black and white, in terms of absolute truth and error."

Finally, there are the powerful emotional mass instincts to which the Soviet regime can appeal, and which it fosters and manipulates with so much skill. First of all, the intense feeling of national pride and superiority born out of the successful struggle with the German invader. "All the Russians to whom I spoke were of the opinion: We have defeated the Germans. Of the extent and effect of the Allied bombardments they were completely ignorant. They themselves had never suffered really heavy air attacks. The American supplies were systematically played down" (Dr. Rene, First Essay). Skillfully combined with this intense and most primitive chauvinism an anti-Western feeling, already noticeable, and exploited, during the Great Purge; now, in the post-war years, whipped up to unprecedented frenzy by a campaign characterized by the series of "purges" in the various fields

of music,

~~S-E-C-R-E-T~~

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of music, literature, philosophy and science. Not without a note of Anti-Semitism ("Anti-Semitism strongly spread among the people" "Report of an Artist"). "One felt quite involuntarily reminded of the former Czarist programs," Dr. Reme writes of the 1949 purges in the Ukraine, "and could watch with what simple methods the mass instincts under the slogan of "patriotism" could be brought to the boiling point - even against the Jews. It is possible that they are going again to prove the victims, although at present they still hold the key positions in the intellectual sphere."

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II. Are there sufficient grounds on which to start an effective psychological campaign against the Soviet Union?

This concise, comprehensive examination of the structure and the psychological effects of the Soviet regime forms the indispensable background for any intelligent discussion of the questions: Are there sufficient grounds on which to start an effective psychological campaign against the Soviet Union; and, if so, what can and should be the objectives which it can set itself?

In the current discussion, those questions are almost invariably taken for granted. It is assumed without any further examination that, if only the proper approach to the task can be found, the strength of our case is so overwhelming that the lies of Soviet propaganda will be scattered by it like chaff before the wind.

Yet, there are very serious objections and problems which have been pointed out by many competent observers and which deserve the fullest consideration. The strength of the Soviet regime is such, the conditioning of the mass of the Russian people, even if depressed by their general status of incessant control and personal insecurity, so thorough that one could well believe all efforts to arouse them vainly spent. That, for instance, is essentially the stand taken by the well-known British social psychologist Geoffrey Gorer, in the concluding section of his book "The People of Great Russia" 1949.

Above all, there is lacking in Russia that nucleus, around which, in the highly instructive parallel case of Germany, the many fold forces of discontent, far more conscious and infinitely more determined than in Russia, could crystallize themselves: a numerically small, but strategically very well placed center of resistance in the very core of the Armed Forces. In Russia the generals do not possess anything like the inner cohesion which their German counterparts had succeeded in preserving from the days in the Reichswehr; while, on the other side, the Communist leadership, since the decisive execution of Tuchatshevski and his group, has known how to impose its closest over the Armed Forces; as shown in the manner in which after the unprecedented series of victories in the Second World War it promptly proceeded, and succeeded, in bringing them to heel again.

In fact, the general discontent in Russia, although widespread, is at present so vague and inarticulate that American field investigators, who since last August have been conducting extensive interviews among recent refugees from the Soviet Union, have arrived at extremely pessimistic conclusions. In their preliminary report released on 5 April this year, Dr. Raymond A. Bauer, the head of the interrogation project, compared the minds of discontented young people in the Soviet Union to pumps turning over, but sucking only air. Members of the

younger

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younger generation who had somehow become dissaffected while in the Soviet Union, the report claimed, had found that they had very little to express even when they had opportunities for discussion with others who felt the same way. Their thought had no content, no material from which to fashion other ideas. (NYT, 6 April 1951).

These findings stand, however in diametric opposition to those of the returned German prisoners of war whose impressions of Russia gave the impulse to this study. "Perhaps you may be of the opinion, Dr. Remé wrote in his 2nd Essay, "that a nation which has been ruled for thirty years along authoritarian lines, is altogether incapable any longer to form for itself an independent opinion out of its own midst. I have, during the five years that I talked with the common folk in their own language, convinced myself of the opposite. Hunger argues much more eloquently than newspapers and lectures..... When the bread comes to an end, the most beautiful ideology ceases to have any appeal. The common people have hungered almost as much as we did - and that is saying something. One of the traits in the Russian character which strikes the Westerner is their laziness, to which an almost unlimited capacity to suffer and be able to bear calamities corresponds. But, after all, only up to certain limits. Would you, for instance, suffer it without getting aroused if approximately every week the electric light would cease for 24 hours? Emergency lighting does not exist, because candles, etc., are unobtainable. That state of affairs is being reluctantly accepted, because people then simply go to sleep. But, no bread and an angry stomach, that is already much less tolerable. (The German prisoners of war, and only these, made themselves for such emergencies kerosene lamps from American tin cans)....

The effect of radio broadcasts in Russian language can in my considered opinion, hardly be estimated high enough. Until recently there was only collective reception, that means, the reception was arranged at a center and from there passed on over the telephone wires to the individual homes. Since 1949, however, it is possible to purchase individual receivers (The plant is somewhere in Latvia). The people who are in the position to purchase such a receiver listen with fanatical zest, particularly at night. One of our nurses told me in June 1949 the Kravtshenko affair "hot from the griddle". She had heard about it over the radio.

"And, naturally, radio has its effects upon the Russians as well, and much more than upon the Western, far more civilized nations. You must take into account how many millions live in a monotony that is for us intolerable in their Kolchoses in the midst of the endless steppe, how limited the means of communication are, how little people can move about even relatively close to the towns, how long the winters are - and how desolate. Now, at the present moment only relatively few people possess a receiver. The Kolchoses are indeed equipped with communal reception - but

there the

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there the absolutely reliable commissar, whom every Kolchosa has, personally arranges the reception. But, in recent times, it has become possible to buy individual receivers. They come from the plants which in 1945 were captured in the Baltic Republics (Reval, Dorpat) and in part also from German reparations. In addition, quite a large number of soldiers have brought home a receiver as part of their booty.

And everybody would love to have one. The price in 1949 was 1100 roubles. Of the 12 officers of my last hospital I had a private receiver of their own. As a special privilege I was frequently invited by one of them whose wife I had operated upon. There I have been able to hear also West German and English radio stations. But then the husband was all the time inconspicuously standing watch before the door. Occasionally, other Germans were also invited to come and listen, where they had proved reliable. Thus I know the story of the military purge in the summer of 1949 from these listening hours. The Russian lady confided it to me in whispers. At that time the Kravchenko-affair was just running. It was sent out in Russian language at midnight, taken in by all possessors of radios with an almost unbelievable avidity and discussed behind closed doors. The dreariness of life is there as great as the craving for sensations and my Russian friends almost burst from desire to pass on their information and eagerness to talk - so it is even before foreigners, and infinitely more so when one watches these people amongst themselves. If I wrote to you that I consider the Soviet system for the time being an unshaken, and unshakable, and yet, in the same breath, have gone on to say, that radio broadcasts in Russian language would be immensely effective, I would explain this seeming contradiction as follows: We Western people are, compared with the Russians, without patience and try to live too quickly. There one has time, immeasurable time. An opponent, has, therefore, equally to equip himself with patience and time, otherwise he is from the outset in a hopelessly inferior position (See Hitler!) [If however you carry on your broadcast campaign for five years, in my opinion the effect of it cannot fail to make itself felt." (3rd Essay).

What then could be the concrete objectives, which such a consistent, long range psychological offensive, as Dr. Romo here envisages, could get itself?

Obviously, as George Kennan has just most forcibly emphasized, not the fantastic goal of "overthrowing the Soviet system by propaganda point". Such an undertaking would inevitably come to grief against the hard facts of the Soviet's physical as well as spiritual holds over their people as we have tried to bring them out in our basic analysis. But, that same basis analysis has equally brought to light the many fold inner tensions and strains in that system of control and it is upon the intensification of these tensions and strains that our efforts could be directed. Without as yet speculating in what particular manner that systematic "loosening up" of the Soviet system might prove of significance, perhaps of decisive

significance,

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significance, at some critical moment in the future. Whether in the case of an open conflict with the Western World; whether in that of the inner crisis likely to develop out of Stalin's demise; or else in that, - envisaged by George Kennan as at least a possibility, - of a peaceful inner evolution of the Soviet system to more acceptable forms of internal and international procedure.

violating

The fundamental practical conclusion to be drawn from this basic consideration would be, not merely to avoid imitating Russian sensibilities by not trying to influence them in their most intimate and most fundamental political affairs, but to lean over backwards in avoiding anything like a political discussion or direct admonition. Instead to concentrate the whole of our impact strictly upon those social and economic hardships and grievances of life under the Soviet regime, of which we know that they affect the masses of its citizens most immediately and most sensitively. It is in this respect, in the endeavor to cover up the political point of our offensive beneath the emphasis purely on the social cleavages in the Soviet system, that our proposal would tend to disagree from the, otherwise in many aspects closely related, plan for a basic strategy "to counter the Big Lie" put forward in the NYT magazine of 11 March this year by Sidney Hook.

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III. What can be attempted?

In the detailed elaboration of any project it is frequently a fruitful approach to start from the opposite, from efforts that have failed or from proposals that are obviously and patently impracticable.

In the course of the past 6 months a virtual deluge of suggestions has poured down upon the officials concerned with the conduct of psychological operations against the Soviet regime. A few choice selections from it (without mentioning their authors) will provide a good starting point and background for our proposals.

One of the most common fallacies, and one expressed with the maximum of eloquence, is the widespread idea that propaganda means "selling the American way of life to the people of the world." It is generally coupled with the tacit, or openly stated, assumption, that the same methods utilized in domestic broadcasting "the technique of the advertising man modified by those of the diplomat and the proficient news editor freed of the restraints implicit in State Department procedure" would "do the trick."

Only slightly deeper is the insight that "like good salesmen and good diplomats we must talk to them in terms of their interest and not primarily in ours.

We want to tell foreign peoples about production, agricultural methods, health and sanitation, and other down to earth methods.

Nor is it finally sufficient to propose that "we must speak very plainly for the ears of the harassed Russian peoples, about things that we have long taken for granted. We must enunciate our friendship, our respect, our sympathy. We must make clear our firm hope that their great nation will in the course of time become able to contribute mightily to the cause of peace and to work for progress through brotherhood, not through hate or bloodshed."

In the light of the detailed analysis of the Soviet system of control and repression from which we have started these pronouncements, however well meant, make strange reading, and raise most serious doubts as to their appropriateness and practicability.

The project, already briefly sketched out in the second part and to be elaborated in greater detail hereafter, starts from radically different assumptions. It does not see its primary purpose in dissipating the fog of lies which Soviet propaganda has cast over this country, nor in conveying to the Russian people either information of practical down-to-earth value or messages of good-will. Its sole objective, as stated, is to play upon the inner cleavages and strains in the Soviet system in order to increase them

and to weaken

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and to weaken the cohesion of that system. To that end it may, indeed, occasionally make use of such other approaches in order to attract the attention of those whom it wishes to reach, for instance, provide useful professional information to the Soviet medical profession. But, its main purpose is to arouse questioning and doubts. First, among the privileged classes themselves. Secondly, among the masses. That end it proposes to achieve not so much by raising such straight forward political issues, like those suggested by Prof. Sidney Hook, which, while "telling", would be liable to arouse the "psychological resistance" particularly of those "privileged" groups whom alone we can count upon reaching directly. Rather, it proposes to "wrap up" its message as carefully as possible; utilizing for its "attraction" every conceivable means of sensationalism and laying the emphasis of its contents upon such, at first sight purely social and economic, hardships as are most intimately familiar to the Russian peoples, in their daily struggle.

To that end, it proposes to direct itself not so much to any rational argument - although this again should not be excluded; see below Dr. Remd's suggestion for a line of national argument likely to make members of the intellectual classes like his friend, Xenia Foodorovna, think - Rather, it aims at utilizing the conscious and subconscious emotional elements in the Russian psychology: such as their intense, melancholy love for their country, their deep distrust of any government or authority of any kind, their laziness and opposition to the strict labor discipline imposed upon them by the Soviet regime, the opposition of Soviet women towards the cynicism with which the authorities treat in practice, if not in theory, the questions of family life, etc., etc.

A particularly important part in this would play the exploitation of the hostility of the Soviet masses against the advantages enjoyed by the better earning and politically better-connected groups of the new Soviet hierarchy. Not only with respect to such elementary, and vital, factors as housing, food, recreation, but also with respect to the increasing restriction of the facilities for education, and hence for social advancement.

Exploitation of these widespread and virulent sentiments would have to be attempted with a most delicate touch. On the radio, which directs itself precisely to those groups against whom the resentment and envy of the masses is to be excited, it could probably not be attempted at all, but it would have to be reserved to such media, like the dropping of newspapers and leaflets, or again the utilization of oral propaganda over the grapevine which would have a chance of reaching directly the broad masses.

The broad basis of this plan for a psychological attack against the present Soviet System is thus the general attitude of unhappiness and dissatisfaction. That general attitude is, necessarily, normally concealed and not easy to tap.

2nd Essay

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2nd Essay, May 1950 -

Dr. Reme* writes: I have enjoyed the acquaintance of many Russians and, in view of their tendency towards endless debates, have had numerous conversations with them. When they had gained confidence in one, there always came a point, where they began to open up their hearts. "Happy" was nobody. The most depressing fact for them was the hopelessness of their existence. "It's just simply so that it will never be different for us." Descriptions that one could buy in the Western World all sorts of things in any quantity desired; cooking pots, ladies hose, chocolate, hats, first called forth a wave of unbelief and then frequently a stream of tears. "It is all so clean with you! There are shops. There are windows on the streets. With you, one is not constantly under control!"

3rd Essay, 31 Aug. 1950 - DR. REME

"I wrote to you that the people I met were not happy and not satisfied. However, they do not know exactly, why that is so, because many of them simply do not know what modern life can be. To them it is necessary to explain how it is even possible to live: without commissars, without forced labor, without fear, that there are countries where even the workingman and the less well earning sections of the population can buy everything, where it is possible to choose, where one can enjoy the luxury of individual requirements even with little money, where not all girls have to have the same pattern on their cotton dresses, where an electric bulb is not a precious object. There are many who do not know that. And, equally important: There are many who during the time of the German invasion and in Germany herself had seen all kinds of things which had impressed them and which they themselves would love to have. They were surprised to find with us that nearly everybody had a camera - loving pictures and childlike, as they are, they would be delighted to have themselves such a thing. All kinds of little knick-knacks aroused their attention: cigarette lighters, metal mirrors, cheap sewing needles (price in Russia 2-3 roubles and moreover not obtainable), God knows what of that sort. Germany impressed them particularly by its cleanliness. The beautiful streets were praised by everybody, the shops, the movie-theaters, the many bicycles (very much desired and in 1949 rarely to be seen and then only from German reparations). How keenly they would like to have a watch. But, there are only two state factories; a wristwatch costs 3-600 roubles. Of our Russian nurses none had a watch. Of our lady doctors 50%. That this is so, every Russian knows. But, that radio-propagandist will be successful, who will be able to make him understand, why it is so.

5th Essay, 17 April 1951 -

How different the Russian conceptions of a social order are than our own, you can see from the following: I told one day that I had possessed a car with which I had driven every day to the hospital. This was at first

simply not

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simply not believed, but received with a condescending smile at such a monstrous lie. For there are simply no private cars. They fear cars which exist are put by the State at the disposal of the highest civilian authorities, a few of the party's elite, and some "parade-horses" from the ranks of the working-class. Again and again I was asked what work my wife had done. One had to say something as a prisoner in order not to create too much the impression of being a capitalist. "How had we lived?" I said I had driven at 6 a.m. into the hospital and came home at 9 p.m. That was believed, because we Germans have the reputation of being industrious. "What had my wife done?" I said as a joke that she had been my chauffeur (because she had occasionally driven me). "Aha, your wife was a chauffeur." That was again comprehensible and it increased my credibility that an assistant at the university should be married to a chauffeur. "How had we lived?" I reported the truth. "That could not be so. Two bedrooms for a couple - that was as in a French novel, and anyhow, for what did one need a separate dining-room." And yet, in the depth of the hearts even of the most hard-boiled, there lives the desire, once to live "as in a French novel." That the ruling clique has quite correctly recognized and, therefore, you will find in the Pravda, in the speeches of Vishinsky, and of others, again and again ironical observations about the "tin-can civilization" of the Americans. A clear indication that here is a neuralgic point. Because, very much against the will of the rulers during the war nearly all Russians have learned to appreciate the invaluable and life-saving properties of American tin-cans. These empty cans you can find still today as "all-purpose" household goods in nearly any Russian household: as flower vases, ashcans, cooking-pots, kerosene lamps, ash trays, for every conceivable purpose, because all of these are, in fact, practically unobtainable. These quotations from Dr. Remo's letters have been reproduced in full, and without analytical comments, because they seem to me to show better than all merely theoretical analysis the sources of the almost all-pervading state of unhappiness and discontent throughout the broad masses of the Soviet peoples, including many groups belonging to the "upper classes."

3rd Essay, 31 August 1950 - DR. REMO

In the same way, his general suggestions for accentuating this feeling of discontent and "bringing it home" against the responsables are best given in his own words: "To make it short, one should carefully avoid hurting the national feelings of the Russians or their attachment to their country in any manner conceivable. At the same time one should make it clear to them in an unmistakable manner, that their whole present private misery (little money, inadequate food, terrible drive to work in a nation constitutionally inclining to laziness, lack of even the most primitive freedom, permanent pressure exercised by the political agents) is the result of the betrayal of Lenin's ideas by Stalin, and that the whole of Lenin's effort to bring about a fundamental reform and reconstruction of Russian public life (universal education, cheap higher studies, industrialization,

raising of the

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raising of the standards of life of the masses) is threatened by Stalin's expansionism, which imposes on the individual such great personal privations and sacrifices."

5th Essay, 17 April 1951 - DS, NOME

In my opinion your propaganda should hit precisely on this point. It should continuously reiterate the following: Through Lenin's revolution Russia has made immense progress. It has received schools, electrification, a heavy industry, education for all, the opportunity to rise for everybody. It has quite logically liquidated the whole section of those who wished to have an easy life at the price of the labor of others. It has destroyed in a gigantic, common effort the enemy who wished to take your country. But, what have you exchanged for it? Why does the law now forbid you to know other countries? Why has the State of Lenin brought you reading and writing, books, light, tractors, land, schools, universities, hospitals? And why does the State of Stalin forbid you now to carry on, what Lenin had begun? What, in fact, are you now able to do with what you have achieved so far? Why is it made so difficult for the individual to have any influence upon the development of all these advances? Why are you not permitted to compare your institutions, which 30 years ago were so progressive with those of other nations? Why is there with you this constant agitation against "cosmopolitism? Why can't you buy any cooking pots? Why are there so few bicycles? Why are your shops continuously without electric bulbs? Why is it considered "cosmopolitic" to sew nice dresses? Why are you not permitted to hear what is happening beyond your borders? Why has the step planned by Lenin from Socialism to Communism not been carried through? Why is it not possible that the immense resources of your country should provide the individual with a better, easier life? Why do you still continue to live so close together in cities, so primitively in the country? Why are the most elementary necessities of life continually missing? Where, after all, you have proved that the simple worker is capable of far greater achievements and without limits in his capability to profit from education? Why do you have to work 48 hours and more in the week and the Americans and British only 40? Why can you partake in the political life of your country only on paper, but not in reality (emphasize how the whole process of election in Russia is but a farce)? There must be some reason, why you are so completely forbidden any contact whatsoever with abroad. There must be some small group of people, which has no interest, that the great work of the Revolution should be carried on. What you hear of your regime are plans and again plans. But, what has really improved in the life of the individual since the death of Lenin. Did not Lenin wish to open the door to the world which the Czars kept shut? Is it not so that your governmental system has in the meantime become completely reactionary? That a small section forces the living strength of your people, wishing to develop itself, into forms that have become completely rigid? That a new class-state has developed,

not worse,

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not worse, but not better, than the one which existed before the great revolution?"

So far Dr. Reme's suggestions. They indicate in addition to the general line proposed a number of special appeals and topics to be developed from it. According to the nature of the medium used, and the groups aimed at, it can be varied and modulated. Where there is a chance to reach broad masses directly, that will be generally the case with such media as "grape-vine" propaganda, the dropping of newspapers by planes or balloons, the criticism can be blunt and the accent can be put upon the resentment of the "men-in-the-street", against those just above him in the socio-economic scale and thus both representing the repressive features of the regime to him as well as enjoying in his eyes undue privileges: such as party functionaries, army officers, plant manager, Stakhanovite labor "aristocrats" (See the pertinent observations Beck and Godin, p. 254: "This society displayed an exclusiveness which had no parallel in capitalist countries. "Good society" was not, so to speak, separated from the rest of the population by a dividing line above which a certain freedom prevailed. Instead it was divided into a whole system of concentric circles, the members of each of which tried to an ever increasing degree to cut themselves off from all socially inferior cords).

Where on the other hand, the instrument chosen will be the radio, that is one likely to be "received" only by members of these "higher classes", the criticism will have to be far more skillfully modulated and concentrated against the top-level groups.

In order to make this general line effective it will, therefore, be desirable to supplement it by as many as possible special groups amongst the "leading" or "superior" sections likely to be in possession of individual receiving sets, or in social contact with the possessors, and for other reasons "desirable" psychological objectives. Such "special groups" would be:

"Women"

"The medical profession"

"The transport organization"

SPECIAL GROUPS

"WOMEN"

The idea of pointing up the smouldering discontent of women with their exploitation by the regime was expressly stressed by Dr. Reme:

3rd letter

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3rd letter, 3rd August -

A very important theme ("The Woman's Hour") is that of the radically and generally unhappy marriages of the women between 25 and 35. Men are rare, and the matter is thus handled, that a man there, where he lives, sets up a household with a woman. If he changes his residence, he leaves her and takes a new one. The same is the case, whenever, for whatever reasons, he has had enough of her. Legal marriages are rare. Divorces are easy. The first costs 400 roubles, the second 600, and the third 400. Alimony does not exist. The children are being taken care of by the State. All that the Russian women like as little as their sisters elsewhere in the world. They groan, complain, and yet are powerless. The reason is: The State needs children and thus has them despite the relative scarcity of men as such as it wants. Also, the state has an interest that all women should work, which in these circumstances is, in fact the case. All of my "girl-friends" had had one, generally several such unhappy love affairs and the judgment of the women about the marriage situation was absolutely unanimous.

Nadia, a rather well-built girl from the countryside, a 25 year old nurse, naturally had also had such an unhappy love affair and was now satisfying her desires by a liaison with a German prisoner of war (of whom she, apparently, hoped that he would take her on his release in his suitcase back with him to Germany). One night the Commissar came somewhat drunk, wishing to control her and then to have a little play with her. She, on her side, did not want to and eluded him more or less brusquely, so that he had to withdraw without having gained his aim. Some time later she was abruptly dismissed, on his account, which caused her many tears. And so ad infinitum - I have witnessed the opposite in the case of a girl who, while guilty of relations with a German prisoner of war, could permit herself this - and much else besides - since she knew at the same time to console the commissar most graciously for the disappointments with his wife.

4th letter, March 1951 -

I think I told you already, that our nurses for a long time read a novel by Zola which had been translated into Russian. Their concluding judgment was: "That is the world, as it really should be. As it is perhaps somewhere in the West. As we wish it, but as we will never come to know it." For the incredibly broad mass of the people with an income of between 300 and 600 roubles hears or reads very little, or nothing, about this other world.

For the year and a half, in which I was at the camp Zuhuvika, this novel by Zola was the only "foreign" book which less and around amongst the entire personnel of the hospital. Well, and what else did these

"high school"

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"high school" graduates read? They had had 2-3 years professional training, passed an examination and liked to read. But, the only books available to them were "The White Birch" and "Steel and Ore", both fanatical propaganda works from the last war, glorifying Stalin, the partisans, and the "man in the street", in the most primitive Black and White and without any artistic value whatsoever. Both published in a million copies or more.

Those amongst the girls, who had studied, the lady-doctors, had a somewhat higher level. They lent me everything which they read themselves. A translation of "Anthony and Cleopatra" in verses, Tolstoy's "War and Peace", quite a lot of Pushkin, Skimontor's "Hero of our Times", Gontschuror was also known, but read only by the "highly cultivated." Dostoyevsky does not exist. Ella Grignonier once lent me for one evening a volume of Schiller, all his dramatic works in a single huge tome. She said, they had read in one night to each other aloud the whole of "The Robbers" and "Don Carlos" - They had been completely overwhelmed. I myself have encountered of foreign translated literature only Mark Twain, who apparently is being read widely.

5th letter, 17 April 1951 -

I would like to tell you a story, as an example, of how you could make the so-called "privileged groups" think:

My friend Xenia Feodovowua had begun her career as the (legitimate !.) daughter of a worker on a Kolchosa. She had good natural sense. Like nearly all Russians which I have come to know she was a chauvinistic Russian natural, warm-hearted, always inclined to gossip, intelligent and lazy, very free-handed, without any interest in her own possessions, passionate to madness. She had been to school at the State's expense, studied medicine the same way, had then been appointed by the State and entered the party already with the end of her university studies. She was the only party-member at our hospital, therefore entrusted with all sorts of official functions, popular, and safe in her position - but, yet, not quite so. For because of her naturalness and passion and her remarkably well-kept hands the commissar kept a sharp watch on her; so sharp, that one day I was within an hour, quite unexpectedly transferred together with one of my comrades into another camp. She hated the Germans like the pest, but in individual cases was again and again overwhelmed by her natural good nature.

"If there should be another war (and there would certainly be another war, not today, not tomorrow, but some day) then she would ask to go to the front and fight there." This woman can be taken as a "type", and what is more, a type who listens to the radio, and whom you will have to take into consideration in your broadcasts. She gave me again and again news papers, to make cigarettes from them, gave me all the books she read

herself - Gorki,

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herself - Gorki, Lenin, Mark Twain, Lennontor who is so popular in Russia, once even a book on Beethoven ("That was also one of those who had been so suppressed by the exploiters") and, above all, regularly the Pravda. "Hitler" interested her beyond all measure (like all Russians) and you can immediately count on the greatest interest and universal listening in order to insinuate other things, which are important to you to get across, if you bring, for instance, sensations about Hitler. Xenia, now wanted one day from me to hear about religion which appeared to her as a ridiculous affair for old women and about the "philosophy of idealism. ("Kent is a reactionary, Hegel is good"). I think, I wrote you already that we came there soon to a point, where she forbade me to speak on "she was becoming uncertain of herself." So, we spoke about something else and I asked her, why she did not visit another country and compare how the common people lived there. "No, that was not possible, a visit abroad the law would not tolerate." I said: "Why not? You have nothing to conceal and in the newspapers it is said every day that the working-class is leading with you a better life than in any other country?" Whereupon she: "No, I will never go abroad for it is against the law of the Soviet Union!"

In my opinion, your propaganda should start precisely at this point. It must continuously reiterate: Through the revolution of Lenin Russia has made immense advances, but what have you exchanged for it? Why does the law now forbid you that you should know other countries, etc.?

In this sense I would address Xenia and I assure you she would at least be startled.

As a matter of fact, one should not forget that the type of Xenia is but one of many. I have had lady doctors, which had just like her risen from the lowest beginnings to relatively impressive positions, but which at the same time were so obtuse that not the most subtly devised broadcast could make them for a moment uncertain. These people will naturally remain totally impervious to any word spoken from America, but I do not estimate their number at more than 50% of the hearers.

A lady doctor of this latter type hated the Germans if possible even more than Xenia and, personally, was responsible for the death of many among them. But in individual cases she bought from her small salary milk, which she gave to the dying consumptives. I saw this rough war woman shed tears when she received nothing but hard words for this from the already half-dead.

In the worst period, winter 1944-5, when we bandaged heavily wounded with strips of old uniforms and operated on them with razor blades and instruments we had fazed ourselves, there appeared a commission with us. It was the First ADC of the Chief of the Soviet Medical Corps. She came from Moscow. Her high position was already evident from the fact that she was equipped with a pencil of her own and a notebook bound in cloth

(something which

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(something which I have never seen again) in which she wrote down her observations. The result was a great uproar. Finally she turned with blazing eyes to us Germans and said: "Don't imagine for a moment that I am making an end to this incredible state of affairs for any love I bear you. I hate you. But I am here to see that the law of the Soviet Union is being executed." (Incidentally, her visit did not bring about any change.) If it should be possible, therefore, for you to arouse in these strangely constituted minds doubts as to the moral validity of that "law," doubts as to its foundations, then it might well be that the house of cards could collapse, which in such an astonishing manner prevents human beings from following their natural reactions and ways of behavior.

To a very good-natured and obtuse lady doctor I once gave voice to my doubts whether a "legally" prescribed medicament would be at all of value and effective, since we did not as yet know anything about the mechanism of its effects. After the usual five minutes of sudden shock had passed by, her eyes suddenly began to light up. It had never happened to her, that anybody could entertain any doubts as to these matters. And after I had explained to her my doubts in objective terms, she got enthusiastic, exclaiming: "Oh, doctor, why are you not a Soviet medical officer? With us you would find all assistance and such assistance as you would find it nowhere in any Western country."

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These observations by Dr. Remo have been translated in so much detail for two reasons. First, they "speak" in their vividness far more eloquently than any abstract conclusions deduced from this. Second, they form a basis from which the outlines of further, far more comprehensive and detailed investigations can be developed.

Women have to be considered, for various reasons, as the key factor in any psychological offensive directed against the Soviet regime. *(Report gives considerable detail on this point, with illustrations.)*

For one, Russian women are well-known to possess far more will power than their menfolk. W. C. Huntington: "THE HOMESICK MILLION," Chapter VIII, "Women of Iron," page 82 -- "Competent observers," writes W. Chapin Huntington, "have more than once pointed out that the type fault of Russian men was a certain indecisiveness and lack of will power. But, they have frequently added that this fault was compensated by the superior firmness of character and energy of Russian women. It was one of the many paradoxes of Russia that the position of women was much more enhanced there than in France and in Germany."

If this is true of Russian women in general, it is even more true of the present generation in the Soviet Union, which has benefited to the full from the freedom opened up to them by the Soviet authorities and the position of equality, if not virtual superiority, which they have enjoyed under the co-educational system in existence until recently.

At the same time, Dr. Remo points out, women as a group suffer particularly under the present regime; not so much in their professional aspirations and careers, but in their general, and peculiar, nature and desires as women and as mothers.

There is, first of all, the general unhappiness described by Dr. Remo from the lack of marriageable men, the fragility of the legitimized or informal associations formed, and the residue of smoldering bitterness left among the whole vast stratum of women between 25 and 35. *HOWEVER,* This unhappiness, and resentment against the cynicism of the regime, must be all the stronger in view of the well-known extraordinarily high standards of sexual morality prevailing among Russian womanhood. This particularly struck the unnamed "artist" to whom I am indebted for a very brief but enlightening report:

"Artist," 5 March 1951 -- "Profound impressions made by landscape and by the attitude of the population (in particular in the attitude of the women towards the German forces of occupation). The first impressions we received after our transfer from the West was that of a very great reserve and cleanliness. A doctor, who had seduced a Russian girl, was quietly "liquidated" by the young men of the village. Virginity is preserved to a very large extent right up to marriage.

"The people,

"The people, by natural temperament sunny and inclined to laziness, today leave for the most part an impression of depression. Towards the POW's they behaved extremely kind and friendly -- frequently explaining that they themselves were not better off. Among the younger generation the feeling of self-confidence was extremely labile -- sometimes very pronounced, at others down to zero. The women, as I mentioned in the beginning, of exceptionally high moral standards, particularly in the country."

This report, agreeing both with Hutchinson's observations, as well as with numerous accounts of Russian moral standards in pre-Soviet days, incidentally disposes entirely of the fantastic picture of well-nigh universal promiscuity and prostitution presented by General El Campesino in his "La Vie et la Mort en URSS."

A first line of pointing up and utilizing this widespread, almost universal bitterness of Russian women, qua woman, would be against the cynicism of their rulers, imposing upon them such intolerable social conditions for the sake of the procreation of a maximum number of children.

Dr. Gsovski: Soviet Civil Law. Vol. I Ch. 4. Present orders: Social. I Family, marriage, and Divorce -

In taking this line, attention must, however, be played to the fact that the Soviet rulers themselves, realizing the untenability of this state of affairs have in recent years made considerable efforts to instigate, if not to abolish it. Since 1945 the laws both with respect to divorce, to the status of the child born out of wedlock, and to the maintenance of children by the state have all been considerably tightened up.

How far these legal efforts really do transform themselves into sociologically and psychologically relevant improvements is another question which Dr. Gsovski was unable to answer from the material at his disposal. In any case, it would seem that here is a vast and primary field of inquiry, deserving not only broadest possible investigation, but constant subsequent observations in order to grasp immediately any new, relevant trends in this key neuralgic spot in the Soviet system.

A particular advantage of taking the woes of womanhood as a primary target is that it is a common concern of all women of the "upper" as well as the "non-privileged" classes. In fact, the dissatisfaction and embitterment described and analyzed above, ensuing out of the frequent transfer of men from one place of occupation to another, are on the whole more likely to occur with the wives -- or common-law wives -- of officials than with genuine working men in factories or in Koolchoses. It is, however, these "upper-class" women, whom alone we can hope and expect to reach directly through radio-propaganda; and in view of the universal and highly emotional nature of the issues touched upon, there is a strong probability that

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from these such appeals will trickle down to their less well-placed sisters whom we have no chance of reaching directly by those means.

(A second aspect, which again affects all woman qua woman, and thus would be a suitable appeal for a radio effort directing itself primarily and directly only at the "upper-class" women is that of the control of and sexual exploitation of women by Soviet commissars and other functionaries as continuously described by Dr. Remo (cases of a lady doctor, Xenia-Feodorovna, the nurse, Nadia, etc.)

Quite different is the third aspect, where the appeal would be to women in their quality of mothers and housewives; arousing them against the conditions under which they have to work, and the failure of the authorities to provide the indispensable facilities for taking care meanwhile of their children. A number of quotations will again best provide the necessary background:

"REPORT OF AN ARTIST" -- "Great inequalities in the standards of life. The mass of the small workers or working women is poorly posed. A working woman knows that she will never be able to afford buying a pair of leather shoes (new ones) and that she has to be happy to pay her food rations from her salary with which they carry on the most miserable of lives. There, the dissatisfaction is probably greatest of all."

Dr. Remo, 2nd letter, May 1950 --

In 1946 there was a most marked famine. The officers had to eat. The so-called "state officials" (leading figures, such as engineers) had something. The rural workers had little; the heavy workers enough; the many others, almost nothing. I saw from my window upon the sales-room of the local bread bakery. From 4 a.m. people were coming up. At 8 p.m. it was opened; then there was a stampede. By 9 p.m. the bread was sold out. Out of this there arose situations like the following. A captain said to me: "Doctor, is the Communist idea not the realization of heaven on earth? We have all got the same-built stomachs. Why, therefore, should we not fill it with the same things?" I was silent and recounted this conversation an hour later to one of our nurses. She laughed bitterly and said: "Yes, yes, if I too had 3000 roubles a month, I would also say that. I have, however, 450. I am going in rags and often have not even the necessary money for bread. Our stomachs are indeed equal, but our purses are very differently sized."

In this connection a piece of information recently reported by the N.Y.T. assumes quite outstanding significance.

N.Y.T., 20 March 1951: p.15 -- According to this report, Soviet trade union officials were undergoing the greatest purge they had been suffering for many years.

Amongst those

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Amongst those most vociferous in their criticisms of these trade union officials were the women workers, whose numbers, the report emphasized, had increased sharply in recent years in the Soviet Union. Many of them had to work 48 hours a week despite the fact that they had pre-school children. Their criticisms to which according to the account they were officially encouraged, centered predominantly around typical womanly preoccupations: the shortage of nurseries and of other facilities, which would permit proper care being taken of their children while they themselves were at their work tasks.

If we take these various convergent observations together, we obtain a third line for pointing up feminine dissatisfaction: less applicable to "upper-class" homes and, therefore, to radio appeal; but all the more suitable for all forms of psychological effort seeking to reach the masses directly; grapevine campaigns, leaflets, special newspaper sheets, etc., etc.

Finally, and fourthly, there is the well-known psychological fact already adumbrated in the material developed above, that class jealousy is far more widespread, and far stronger among women, than among men. Dr. Romo gives an interesting instance of this: 5th letter, 17 April 1951: - "It has made, for instance, a deep impression on all Russians I have known, that the late president Kalsnim went himself in poor clothing into the food store to make his purchases, whereas now the "officers' ladies" are driving about in a "carriage," which apparently is being felt as particularly luxurious and arousing indignation. And yet, you should see those carriages once ! "

SPECIAL GROUPS

"TRANSPORT ORGANIZATION"

Among the Special Groups the "Transport Organization" that is the roughly 3 million employees of the Russian railway system constitute an obvious target, deserving particular attention and investigation.

Beck and Godin - Russian Purge, p. 109

"Even before the October Revolution railwaymen had acquired a special position in relation to the rest of the working class, among whom they regarded themselves as a kind of aristocracy. They were better paid and their trade-union organization was fatter. Many railwaymen's families were interconnected by marriage and the job of railwayman often passed from father to son...". The railwaymen's union was one of the few which did not rally to the Bolsheviks at the time of the October Revolution and even attempted active resistance.

Because of this spirit of independence the members of the transport organization were from the outset suspected.

In addition, in the course of the process of the collectivization of the farms and industrialization they became a critical bottleneck in the Soviet economy. On the one hand, much more was required in achievement from the Soviet railway system, than that system had ever been designed to fulfill. On the other, the Soviet leaders and their planners, in the initial stages, concentrated all their resources and energies upon the speediest building up of heavy industries, at the expense, not only of consumers goods, but of the railway system.

The resulting inadequacy of the rail system to carry the load desired led in early 1935 to the appointment of Kagonovich as Peoples Commission of Transports.

However, an organization as powerful as that of the railwaymen in the hands of a personality as important as Kagonovich was bound to be regarded as a potential danger in a dictatorship and the NKVD was bound to look at it with jealous eyes.

Membership in the organization of the People's Commissariat for Transport became preeminently one of the "objective characteristics" liable to lead to unrest.

In the course of the great wave of purges from 1936-39, the holders of nearly all senior administrative posts were arrested, as well as a large proportion of the stationmasters.

Despite the

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Despite the allotment of sharply increased quantities of labor, steel and other resources, bottlenecks and railway accidents continued; were invariably regarded as acts of political sabotage and resulted in arrests and confessions. Special departments of the NKVD were concerned exclusively with the railways and an NKVD guard posted at all big stations.

Immediately after the end of the purge came the war bringing new and unprecedentedly heavy demands upon the "Transport Organization". They were met by the Soviet authorities, in part by the ruthless exploitation of the railroads left to them by the German advance, in part by a merciless tightening of the views of discipline throughout the railroad system. In 1943 they were subjected to Martial Law, but unlike other fields of civilian activity, this has not been lifted during the post-war years. On the contrary, throughout the post-war period the emphasis has been not only upon the extension, and improvement of the railway system, but upon the intensification of its discipline. The summary by Special "political departments" were set up in all of its branches, in order to intensify Communist propaganda among its workers and to apply additional pressure for exemplary labor discipline among them.

In addition to these motives ensuing out of its own history the "Transportation Organization" assume further significance through the fact that any effort breakdown an attempt at Russian aggressive through Strategic Bombardment, must inevitably concentrate on the Russian railroad system as its primary target.

Investigations of the effects of Allied strategic bombardment against Germany as well as Japan have shown beyond doubt the necessity of concentrating upon the enemy's transportation system as the key target, rather than his primary (iron, steel, synthetic oil and rubber) or munitions industries. This is even more true in the case of the Soviet Union, where information as to the structure of the varied kinds, relatively plentiful, but, where, on the contrary, the veil of secrecy drawn by the Soviet authorities particularly over the new industrial areas to the east of the Urals and in Central Siberia is so far effective, as to leave the transportation system as the one easily recognizable target.

For all these varied reasons the Russian Transport Organization should be given special attention in any scheme of Psychological Attack, particularly from the point of view that it may at any moment become necessary to link such a psychological attack up with the physical attack by strategic bombardment.

Special "guiding lights" in the planning and executions should be the points touched upon in the above brief outline:

1. The traditional

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1. The traditional spirit of independence of the railwaymen.
2. Their special sufferings in the great purgo.
3. The extraordinarily harsh disciplinary demands made upon them during the war and ever since.
4. Their liability to suffer for the misdeeds of the Soviet regime as the inevitable primary targets of Allied Strategic Bombardment attacks.

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SPECIAL GROUPS

"THE MEDICAL PROFESSION"

The idea of selecting the medical profession as a special target group was not due to any concrete suggestion, but to the general impression created by Dr. Reimo's accounts as well as other studies (Dr. B. DDibold, etc.). An inquiry has been addressed to Dr. Reimo on the prospects of such an approach. The following suggestions are, therefore, made subject to their modification by his reply.

First of all the fact is remarkable that contrary to the state of affairs in other countries the medical profession in the Soviet Union remains to a preponderant degree in the hands of women. Until 1935, engineers were paid higher salaries than physicians, and during the period of the First Five Years Plan were at the top of society. Engineering was thus more attractive to many intelligent young men, than was medicine. Women were encouraged to step into the gap. However, in Soviet medical work, special stress was laid upon "the protection of mother and child", an aspect of the physician's work which appealed particularly to women, and for which they would be specially qualified. Thus their percentage among medical students increased steadily: 1928- 52%; 1931 - 58%; 1934 - 75.1%, jumping during the war to over 80%.

"Dr. B." - 18 Feb. '51

Similarly "Dr. B" who between 1945 and 1947 was on familiar terms with many Russian and Polish colleagues in Silesia reports briefly: "Medical service of the Red Army extremely specialized. Principally women. Medical training along narrow, specialist lines, as with technical assistants. Only very few leading physicians ("Chogacrzte") with comprehensive knowledge of their field. Physicians always with high rank, generally "Oberarztl".

These brief observations show that the problem of the "medical profession" is to a large extent a subsection, and a particularly important subsection of the general approach to Soviet women.

It would appear, on general grounds, a particularly hopeful line of approach.

a. Because it is a group of women occupying "privileged position" and that, by their own efforts and in their own right. They would thus be accessible to radio appeal (Dr. Reimo chose his lady doctor friend Zenra Frodorevna as the "type" of privileged women to whom one would address oneself) yet, unlike e.g. the wives of the officers class, one which would not feel so

irretrievably

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irretrievably bound up with the present artificial system, as to be unable to think beyond it, or to have to fear its breakdown.

b. Because through the nature of the activities the medical profession is particularly susceptible to any appeal to its reason as well as its natural human sentiments. This general impression of the Russian medical profession is being fully corroborated by the descriptions of the various Russian head doctors as well as medical commissions given by Dr. DiGold in his volume.

c. The fact that Russian medical training as emphasized by Prof. Sigerist and again "Dr. B" is narrowly specialized would offer further advantages. By integrating the appeal to the Russian doctors into a regular program of professional post-graduate education, which they feel they need very badly, it would be possible to utilize their professional interest and curiosity in order to induce them first to "listen in" regularly and from there gradually leading them on to the more general topics suggested. However, such a procedure, which in the case of other professions, for instance engineers, might for obvious reasons, not be recommendable at this time, does not raise similar objectives in the particular case of the medical profession.

FACTORS OF

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FACTORS OF POSSIBLE "PSYCHOLOGICAL RESISTANCE
TO BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT

In planning and carrying through propaganda campaigns far too little attention is frequently being given by their enthusiastic ex-ecutants to the fact that most people resent nothing so much as any feeling of "being propagandized." This has been notably a weakness of operations conducted in the Middle East and India, and should have to be most carefully avoided with so sensitive, and hyper-nation-alistic, a people as the Russians. Not only that all open, or dis-guised, admonitions, exhortations, etc. would have to be avoided most carefully, but this consideration should also be kept sight of in determining the instruments. Thus in any campaign based upon the dis-tribution of printed matter regular newspapers, or material made to look like them, should have preference over leaflets.

Dr. Remd' provides an interesting sidelight on this delicate psychological aspect from his own reactions to Allied broadcasting during the War. Like a considerable portion of the German people he had continued to listen to Allied, particularly British, broadcast, despite the death penalty placed upon it by the Nazi authorities at the outbreak of the war. "But - he writes - I myself have given up the hearing of foreign broadcasts approximately since 1943 completely, because I observed, that every time it gave me a "bad day" and that something always stuck in my mind. Thus, if I may judge from myself; propaganda has its effects, even upon critical minds."

Two lessons can be drawn from this observation. The first, that consistent propaganda is likely to achieve some effect, though it can naturally not be foretold precisely how much. Second, that no efforts should be spared to conceal and camouflage its intent in order to prevent it from resulting ultimately in a purely negative reaction as in the case of Dr. Remd'.

IV. Possible Ways

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IV. Possible Ways of Carrying Through Such an Action.

1. Basic Determinations.

The first and foremost consideration of any such effort, as Dr. Reme¹ pointed out, would be to equip oneself with a full measure of the necessary time and patience. That not merely in the actual execution, but no less in the preparation. Only on the basis of a long and thorough analysis of the entire field, and in particular of the special neuralgic spots to be concentrated upon can such an operation at all be started with any hope of success. On a very rough calculation it would be well to allow as much as some 18 months to this preparatory phase and thereafter the full five years of incessant hammering away suggested by Dr. Reme¹.

As for the actual procedure "I would not," he writes further in his Third Essay, "seek to concentrate the impact upon critical periods, but rather to carry on the operation as your "endless sausage" and always directed upon the same "soft" spots. An example from the war will illustrate what I am driving at. Artillery, as you know seeks to get the range of its objectives by straddling; but, once the range has been found, the fire is being directed, and, if necessary shifted, by the frontline artillery observer. Now every German soldier knew that the Russian artillery operated along absolutely rigid lines and after having once found the range continued to fire without change upon the same strip, on the sides of which one could move with complete impunity. That is not accident, but the result of the national character (think in comparison of the fantastically flexible, elegant and adaptable fire direction with the French.) Now, in my opinion, one should counter the Russians in the same manner in which they themselves are accustomed to fire: always on the same strip until not a single blade of grass remains. Thus, one has first to accustom the people that they can hear our broadcasts regularly at midnight. In daytime it would be too dangerous, because of the possibility of being overheard. Then one has to be a bit sensational - economic statistics they hear already on their own programs enough to make them sick. But, the touching story, how a Russian colonel fled over the borders to the Americans, because he felt in danger of life and limb, and then said, that it had been the hardest day in his life, because he knew, that now he would never be able to see his dear country again - that story has literally squeezed my friend Shura to tears, as she recounted it to me. For these people cling to their harsh, melancholy and brooding country with a passion that is almost inconceivable. This trait is being cultivated by the regime consciously and with great skill and that the propaganda will have to make use of before all others. The Pravda would probably not have written with vehemence against the Tolstoy-Association in the USA if it did not suspect in it a real danger in this decisive point."

2. The Written Word.

"It interests you, to know, what the people in Russia read! In

order to

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order to appreciate that properly it is necessary to make clear to oneself what it implies, that it is only during the past 25 years that the mass of the Russian people have "technically" learned to "read". The number of illiterates was still amazingly large until the revolution of 1917. Only Lenin has had so many schools set up, so many teachers (and women teachers !) mobilized, and put so much iron pressure behind it all, that the common man too is now in a position to read. I have met not a single illiterate among the younger generation, not even among Tartars and Central Asiatics. Only as a curiosity in the Ukraine a few old peasant women, who could not read. Naturally, with a nation which only since the last generation is accustomed to read, the effects of the printed word are completely different from those upon the Western nations. One has to think of it in similar terms as in the case of negro tribes suddenly coming into contact with Western civilization. There one saw the chieftain in a loin cloth, but adorned with a stiff collar and tie, and laughed about it. The novelty overwhelms the primitive mind at first. He grasps it with eagerness and impatience and uses it differently, than those who have invented it, or who for generations have been accustomed to it as our every-day experience. Thus, according to my observations, the printed word has upon the common man in Russia a far more powerful effect, simply for the reason, that it is printed, that it stands there, black on white, and because he feels satisfaction in the fact that he actually is able to decipher it. For his father, certainly his grandfather could not yet do that. And, therefore, the Russian, naturally only the common man combines with the act of reading the feeling of a subjective achievement and this feeling is injected into the content of what is read, so that the read "material" too receives, so to speak, in his eyes an enhanced significance, so that a particular importance is being attributed to it, and the content of the printed word is fundamentally accepted without questioning.]

I hope, I have succeeded in explaining to you what I mean, for I think it is worth taking notice of. Yet, I have never even heard it mentioned. Thus those have maintained themselves in Russia habits, which with us belonged to the Middle Ages, amongst which is the universal habit of public recitation. That has probably more than one cause. On the one side, that not so long ago in every village only one could read, serving in the way of the nordic skoilds as conveyer of information to his fellow villagers. But, probably also in fact, that the whole people is imbued with a powerful urge of sociability and desire to talk, which they like to satisfy in this manner. Most of the simple Russian girls I know, took a great pleasure in reading aloud to themselves alone, or they read to each other, without naturally being conscious of their desire to show off this new ability before themselves and before others. As a matter of fact, this reading to others aloud was very characteristic. They started anywhere in the middle of a volume and broke off equally abruptly. Carrying anything through to its natural end is as little a trait of the Russian common man, as thinking anything through to its logical conclusion. That is a quite fundamental trait of this nation!

They like to

They like to read, because they are still impressed by the fact that they can read, and they read out of sheer curiosity, just as we read as children. Being and seeming are not yet separated for them. But: they got very little to read! I believe, I wrote you already, that Pravda and Izvestia in the provinces are accessible only to a very few privileged. The very large town and country district Stalino had a single provincial newspaper "The Socialist Donbas," 4 pages filled with the last days news from the Pravda. A town like Tshistiakovo had in addition a 4 page news-sheet in a small format, which brought the Pravda news of the day before yesterday. These small news-shoots are fairly widely read. I think fundamentally the Russians themselves find their Pravda rather boring. You know it probably. Three pages of congratulatory addresses to Stalin and rows to fulfill the current plan, one page of international affairs. No novel, no sensations, no sport, practically no lighter writing. If one were to distribute an aggressively made up Western daily in Russia over the Russian countryside - say, by air - the people would be so surprised as to completely lose their composure, precisely because of the fact that it was printed, and, if they saw, what kind of things exist elsewhere in the world, for instance advertisements, a stirring love story, a little football, some criminal cases. Only such a newspaper would have to be under all circumstances printed upon a paper with which one can also roll cigarettes. I am mentioning this from most profound personal experience.

The spoken word is familiar to the Russian, frequently, probably, to drive him sick - but the printed word is going to have a wholly different, infinitely more penetrating effect, than with ourselves.

These observations of Dr. Rome's appear highly original and interesting and his concrete suggestions well worth going into. Certainly, from a psychological point of view a specially prepared newspaper, such as he suggests, would appear infinitely superior to leaflets, for the simple reason that it would not have to the same extent the psychologically repellent character of "something specially made up." The problem would lie less in preparation as in the means of conveying it, into which he does not enter. Dropping it from planes would be out of the question until actual general war should break out. It would, however, seem worth while to consider, and, if acceptable, to experiment with paper balloons such as the Japanese used with great ingenuity and considerable technical success during the last stages of the Second World War. The balloons themselves might be made of printed paper, taking into consideration Dr. Rome's suggestion that it should be suitable for rolling cigarettes. Moreover, in order to dissuade the finders from turning them in to the authorities it might not be a bad idea to weigh each such balloon with a pound or so of good Virginia tobacco.

3. The Spoken Word.

"The radio", Dr. Rome writes in his Fifth and last Essay, does not direct itself, as with you or with us, to the "common man", but either to the people with high salaries or to those who by their connection

with the regime

with the regime are in the possession of a receiver. (Both categories naturally coincide frequently.) The people capable of listening in are thus: engineers, plant-directors, mine-workers, specialists, in the heavy industries, directors of storage houses, administrative officers, directors of Kolchoses, officers from the rank of major upwards and naturally MWD officers of every rank. Members of the intelligentsia only, in so far as they are in good standing with the party and hence able to achieve a higher income by the combination of several jobs (a state of affairs that is frequently the target of the attacks of the envious). Teachers, doctors, smaller employees, the vast army of the anonymous laborers on the Kolchoses, the equally vast army of the unskilled industrial workers are hardly likely every to get into possession of a receiver and thus hear only what the official propaganda prepares for them and what the Commisar dials in. But, as it is the inevitable nature of authoritarian regimes (we know it only too well from Germany) the more the authorities endeavor to "cover" the mass of their subjects from extraneous intellectual influences, the more the grape-vine "blooms"; the more eagerly everybody is on the lookout for gaps which may permit a ray of light, however small, to penetrate through leaks in the iron curtain, into the normalized darkness. The more there is whispering - and belief, if one of the privileged ones for once does not keep tight, what with the comparatively large number of these peoples simply cannot fail to happen. One should, therefore, in such broadcasts take first of all into consideration, that they are being heard by the saturated, by those, who owe their positions to the ruling regime, and stand and fall with it. Then, however, one must equally know, that if in one point the dam does not hold quite firm, the breakthrough at that point could easily swell to a flood of quite tremendous dimensions. One must try so to speak to get at the dissatisfied (which it is impossible to reach directly by radio) via the satisfied, which, for instance, could be done, by making a broadcast so sensational, so tempting for gossiping and passing on, so deeply revealing of the most intimate affairs of one of the "big bosses", that those, who have heard such things directly, simply cannot keep their mouths shut. If the curiosity is once aroused in this manner, then much is won - the ears are tense and the desire to hear further secret revelations from the same source, overwhelming. Such broadcasts could very well be quite vulgar and aggressive - some woman's affair, or secrets about the death of the defender of Leningrad (whose name I have forgotten) or the "real reasons for the shortage of.... - something or other is there always "short": bread or meat or shoes, or cotton cloth. One should get from the American Embassy information in which article the shortage was at the moment particularly acute, because that changes every three months." These observations by Dr. Roud appear of very considerable interest in several respects. First of all, they forcibly emphasize the basic fact of all radio propaganda beamed to the USSR itself (in contrast, for instance, to the East European satellites); namely, that it is received only by a small minority belonging to the saturated classes. That implies that vital necessity of giving all messages outwardly a harmless, non-political character, so as not to arouse the apprehensions of the recipients, while keeping

their desire

their desire for sensations at a fever pitch. The case of the Kravshenko affair, whose effect he mentions in several of his earlier essays, is a significant illustration. Failing such "natural" sensations it would be necessary to invent them with the necessary degree of plausibility. In another context in this same essay, his discussion of his friend, the lady doctor, Zonia Feodorovna, Dr. Remé mentions her acute interest in Hitler, as with all Russians. This too might well be turned to advantage, by using revelations about Hitler's career and death as pegs to hang other messages to. The idea might even be seriously considered to running a whole series of such "sensation" stories about Hitler slanting it so that the fundamental, disagreeable similarities between himself and Stalin would gradually emerge as the "moral" of the whole story.

Secondly, it emphasizes the need to consider all broadcasts as messages designed ultimately to reach, through the satisfied, "par ricochet" the masses of the dissatisfied.

Thirdly, it gives a good deal of food to the question whether, and how far, this complicated process of reaching the masses by radio indirectly, could be supplemented by direct propaganda via the "grapevine" system. Particular attention in this respect deserve all those parts of the border between the Soviet orbit and the non-Communist world, where members of the same ethnic and cultural communities live on both sides of the frontier. In Europe these areas of inter-communication, except for such points as Berlin and Vienna, are probably too closely watched; but in Asia there are a number of such instances, the Armenians, the Azerbaijanis, etc. well deserving being included in any such consideration.